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Over 500 Attend Salisbury-Rowan READS! Event held at East Branch of Rowan Public Library

Rockwell Site Hosts Fourth in Series of Community Events Created to Offer Awareness for Reading to Children

Salisbury, NC _August 5, 2009 – The City of Salisbury and Rowan County five-week summer reading enrichment program entitled, “Read to Your Child Days: Salisbury-Rowan READS!” continued this week in Rockwell at the East Branch of the Rowan County Public Library, 110 Broad Street. A crowd of over 500 children and adults attended the learning initiative and free-book-giveaway on Wednesday August 5, from 5 pm - 7 pm. The program, which travels to a different location in Rowan County each week, was created to promote reading to children, encourage children to obtain a free library card, and to provide a free book to all children in attendance. The events offer free refreshments, information, giveaways, story-time by local government leaders, emergency service vehicle displays, arts and crafts for children, and a variety of exciting door prizes. A complete Nintendo Wii System is given away each week as a grand prize.

Of the more than 500 citizens in attendance, an estimated 250 were children. Rowan Public Library Director Jeff Hall and South/East Branch Library Manager Suzanne White report that sixty-five children acquired new library cards during the festivities. Rockwell Mayor Beau Taylor, Granite Quarry Mayor Mary Ponds, and Faith Mayor Bill Johnson hosted the community event. Reading sessions by government officials took place in the children’s area of the library. In addition to Taylor, Ponds, and Johnson, Faith Fire Chief Scott Gardner, Granite Quarry Alderman Eloise Peeler, Rockwell Alderman Chuck Wingerson, and Rowan County Commissioners Tina Hall and Raymond Coltrain took turns reading to children during story-time. Mayor Susan Kluttz of Salisbury, Rowan County Commission Chair Carl Ford, and Rowan County Commissioner Chad Mitchell were also in attendance and offered support for the event by emceeding the festivities and the door prize activities. Mason Deaton of Rockwell was the winner of the Nintendo Wii System.

Mayor Beau Taylor of Rockwell shares, “We are excited to have so many individuals visit our library in Rockwell. There is truly a connection between the parents and the children at this event and we are proud to be a part of this outstanding reading program. I appreciate the opportunity to work with Mayor Ponds and Mayor Johnson and also appreciate the support received from Granite Quarry Town Manager Dan Peters. This event is just great!” Mayor Mary Ponds of Granite Quarry echoed Taylor’s sentiments and offered, “I think this event is awesome. I am glad that we have put reading in the

forefront and are emphasizing its importance. This event could not have come at a better time and I am so glad that we can provide this free program for both parents and children.” Faith Mayor Bill Johnson noted the importance of the attendance with regards to new library card distribution. Johnson shares, “This has been a great experience for the Rockwell, Faith, and Granite Quarry community. It’s wonderful to have such a large turnout and to see kids receive new library cards if they didn’t already have one.” Johnson also commented on the overall partnership by adding, “Everyone has truly worked together to make this event a success and we appreciate the opportunity to partner with Salisbury and Rowan County on behalf of our children and their future success.”

In attendance at the event were numerous emergency, rescue service providers, and police car displays from Rockwell, Granite Quarry, and Faith. Children also enjoyed the YMCA bounce house and a Rockwell Public Services heavy equipment display. Additional displays included Project Safe Neighborhoods, Smart Start Rowan, Census 2010, and Rowan Recycling featuring Rowan County Recycling Coordinator Lori Swaim. Craft areas for children included face painting, tattoo art, bead working, and coloring stations.

Municipalities participating in the Salisbury-Rowan READS! Program, have proclaimed the July 15 – August 12 observance publicly during their respective municipal meetings. The five-week book giveaways will continue for three more weeks at the locations listed below. Each event takes place on a Wednesday evening from 5 pm – 7 pm. The final event will take place in the western part of the community on August 12 at Cleveland Town Hall, 302 E. Main Street in Cleveland. Citizens are cordially invited to attend.

Rowan County is made up of nineteen departments that are committed to providing a wealth of services to County residents and businesses. For more information regarding Rowan County local government, please visit www.rowancountync.gov on the World Wide Web. The City of Salisbury is an equal opportunity employer with over 180 different job classifications and 400 full time positions. For more information regarding the City of Salisbury and its services and departments, please visit us on the web at www.salisburync.gov.

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